

U.S. Serial No. 10/078,347

NIP-256

REMARKS

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

Claims 2, 5-6, and 8 are now pending.

Claims 2, 5-6, and 8 were noted as containing allowable subject matter on page 3 of the Office Action. Accordingly, these claims have been rewritten in independent form including all limitations of their respective base claims. Thus, claims 2, 5-6, and 8 are believed to be in allowable condition.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel J. Stanger
Registration No. 32,846
Attorney for Applicants

MATTINGLY, STANGER & MALUR, P.C.
1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 370
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 684-1120
Date: January 6, 2005